

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

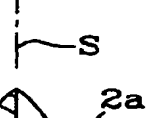
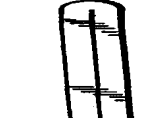

Favorable reconsideration of this application in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 24-25, 28, 32, 34, 36-60, 70-85 are presently active in this case. The present Amendment amends Claims 24, 25, 36, 45, 48-50, 70, and 72.

The outstanding Office Action rejected Claims 24, 25, 28, 32, 34, 36-41, 47-51, and 75-79 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Koppel (U.S. Patent No. 5,318,051) in view of Friedman (U.S. Patent No. 2,175,344). Claim 38 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Koppel in view of Friedman further in view of Benoit (FR Patent No. 2,769,805). Claims 43 and 44 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Koppel in view of Friedman further in view of McKay (U.S. Patent No. 5,325,878).

Claims 45, 46, 52-60, 80-85 were indicated as allowable and Claims 70-74 were indicated as allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicant acknowledges with appreciation the indication of allowable subject matter. In response, Claim 45, 70 and 72 are rewritten in independent form. Therefore, Claims 45-46, 49-50, 52-60, 70-74, and 80-85 are believed to be allowable.

In response to the rejections of the claims under 35 U.S.C. §103(a), independent Claims 24, 25 and 36 are amended to require the limitation of Claim 49. The outstanding Office Action does not provide any basis for rejecting Claim 49. Specifically, Claim 49 (and now independent Claims 24, 25 and 36) require that after assembling, the teeth of one of the two parts have *ends which converge toward ends* of the teeth of the other part. An example of such converging teeth is shown in the figures of the present application, Fig. 4 being reproduced below. By contrast, the teeth of the combs of the applied prior art are either straight (Koppel) or divergent (Friedman). See comparison table below.

Example of the claimed <i>convergent</i> teeth	<u>Koppel's</u> <i>straight</i> teeth	<u>Friedman's</u> <i>divergent</i> teeth
 <p><u>Fig. 4</u></p>	 <p>FIG. 4</p>	 <p><i>Fig. 3.</i></p>

All claim limitations must be considered when analyzing the non-obviousness of an invention.¹ In the present case, even if the combination of the Koppel, Friedman, Benoit and McKay references is assumed to be proper, the combination fails to disclose the claimed invention. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that the present Amendment overcomes the rejections based on these patents.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment, no further issues are believed to be outstanding in the present application, and the present application is believed to be in condition for formal Allowance. A Notice of Allowance for Claims 24-25, 28, 32, 34, 36-60, 70-85 is earnestly solicited.

Finally, Applicant respectfully requests *that the references cited in the Information Disclosure Statements filed November 20, 2001 (specifically reference AW), January 3, 2006 and January 17, 2006 be acknowledged as having been considered in the next Office Action. This request has been made repeatedly throughout prosecution of this application*

¹ See MPEP 2143.03

Application No. 09/787,409
Reply to Office Action of January 13, 2009

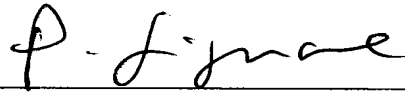
and still these IDS have not been acknowledged as having been considered.

Acknowledgement of this request would be appreciated.

Should the Examiner deem that any further action is necessary to place this application in even better form for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to contact Applicant's undersigned representative at the below listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.



Philippe J.C. Signore, Ph.D.
Attorney of Record
Registration No. 43,922

Customer Number

22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000
Fax: (703) 413 -2220
(OSMMN 06/04)